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787, 828

ON6 Buka
Kurtatchi

[For further information concerning the content of dreams and their interpretation, see category 159.]

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844 enter it for three days after the birth of the child, and other men only after he has done so. But the latter part of this prohibition is not always strictly observed.

844 824 There are a number of medicines which are used to hasten a delivery if the women who are watching think it is unduly protracted. The following is typical:

Pupūna (*Pteris tripartita* Sw.)

Take some of the leaves, heat them, and rub them on the woman's abdomen. Squeeze the sap into water and give it to her to drink.

The use of other plants for the same purpose has been described in the account of the birth of Manĕv's child. One more may be mentioned because it seems to be comparable with our use of an anodyne:

Wanōnō (*Erythrina*, 'the coral tree').

When the woman feels that the pains are very severe, rub the leaves between your hands, mix them with water, and give the water to her to drink; it will lessen the pain.

A number of other plants which may be given to facilitate delivery could not be identified from my specimens. They are used in similar fashion to those above described, or in some cases are chewed with the betel-mixture and rubbed on the woman's abdomen. To the account of the use of one of these my informant added: 'If when the plant is pulled up it is found to have a forked root, the woman is carrying twins.'

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RESTRICTIONS ON SEXUAL INTERCOURSE

843 There is no taboo on sexual intercourse right up to the time of child-birth, but in practice it is discontinued towards the end of the pregnancy, though the husband may continue to occupy the same hut until the pains begin.

846 After the birth, intercourse with the mother is strictly interdicted. The duration of this period of abstinence was described to me in various ways: 'Until the child can run about.' 'Until the child begins to talk.' The criterion most frequently cited was: 'Until the child has yaws.' This tropical skin disease falls to the lot of every child, usually between one and two or three years of age. I estimate that, in general, intercourse is not resumed until the child is at least two years old. There is no taboo on the husband's

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stage has been reached, he will then collect the *kobol* and proceed to the house of the patient. Entering, he fastens the door, and gives the *kobol* to the patient, who drinks the mixture. The two of them then go outside the house and the "doctor-man" obtains the leaf of a native vine *pahu*. Biting off a portion himself he gives another portion to the patient, and the two masticate the leaf, mixing it with betel-nut; chewing and spitting out the masticated juices. The two then re-enter the house, and a *pahu* leaf is hung up inside the house in such a position as to hang near the face of the patient when he is sleeping. The patient goes to bed and sleeps. In his sleep he dreams that he is endeavouring to find the man who gave him the poison, but a spirit visits him in his dream and prevents him from seeing the man; explaining to him that he has not been poisoned at all. In the morning the "doctor-man" inquires of the patient as to what he has seen during the night. "I saw no man who had poisoned me" replies the patient, or words to that effect. "I am well now, I have not been poisoned, for the spirit told me so." The patient then makes a speedy recovery.'

Other forms of harmful magic. There are milder forms of harmful magic which are not considered in the same light as 'making poison', but as legitimate methods of punishing some one who has done you an injury. These were told to me in the course of discussions on the use of various plants for medicinal purposes. There was no secret about them, and they were clearly regarded in the same light as any other 'prescriptions'.

If a thief persistently steals your taro.

Scrape to a powder the bones of a crocodile, and bury some of this powder (*wesopini*) on the road to the taro garden, where the thief will walk over it. When you know that he has done so, take up the package and burn it. The thief will get a bad sore on his leg.

For a man stealing coco-nuts.

Take some leaves of the shrub *ruruparī*, put them into a young coco-nut which has been emptied of its milk through the eye. Lay this on the ground in the coco-nut grove. Chew the root of the same shrub with the betel-mixture, spit on some dead branches and throw them down where the coco-nut is. When the thief comes into the grove his belly will become very painful, so that he cries out. He will not be able to walk, but will crawl home and lie down in his house. Then you must watch till the tide comes in, and then plug up the hole in the shell of the young coco-nut. This makes the thief short of breath, and he stays at

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man's shadow, his reflection in a glass or in a pool of water, or his 828
'spirit' while he is still alive, but never for the spirits of the dead, 774
the word for which is always *urar*). On one occasion a man, after telling me his dream, asked me: 'Where does our spirit (using the word *abin*) go when we dream?' I said I didn't know. Then he said: 'The night fools us; we see something in our sleep and we think it is true.'

A more sophisticated explanation, given by a young man of 828
Petats, who had had some contact with white people, runs as 177
follows: 'If a man eats too much, and then goes to sleep, his belly is too full, and the blood in his skin turns round and round all the time, and the blood runs into his eyes while he is asleep; then he sees a bad man, just like the men who are dead; the man wants to fight him. Or else he sees a friend belonging to another place who comes and talks to him.'

They divide their dreams quite definitely into two classes. One 828
informant, talking pidgin-English, said to me: 'Some dreams are true, some are gammon.' 'Gammon' is used in pidgin-English for anything false or deceiving, for nonsense, or for a deception intended to tease. In telling dreams which they class as 'gammon' they often conclude the account by saying: 'I got up and said, "Oh, what have I been doing, I have been dreaming, that's all".' Or, as one man put it, 'Then I woke and thought it was true and I was very sorry, and I went to look, and it was all right, so I knew the night had deceived me.'

Of the dreams of the other class—those held to be 'true', it is 828
fair to say, as Dr. Seligman suggests (1932, p. 216), that 'the dream 787
is a significant mental element in waking life upon which a man may be ready to act and for which he is prepared to suffer'. Instances of this are not wanting in my collection. If a man dreams of cohabiting with a woman who is taboo to him, it is as bad as if he had actually done so. After telling how he had dreamed of going to fish for bonito and being pursued by a shark, the dreamer volunteered the statement: 'If there had been a cry of "*Atūn*" (bonito, see p. 327) to-day I would not have gone out, if there is one to-morrow I will not go either, but after a few days it will be all right.' Well knowing the excitement and the rush to put to sea that invariably attend upon the cry of '*Atūn*', I realized that to refrain from joining in the expedition was a very real deprivation which would only be tolerated under pressure of an equally real

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828 fear. The dreamer added: 'If I had dreamed that a man was lying
787 asleep and that I stepped over him, it would mean that the shark would not eat me.' As usual, however, he could not explain why such an incident should bear this meaning.

Again, to dream of falling from a coco-nut tree means that some one will die. If the dream is that another man falls from the tree the dreamer will tell him next morning and warn him not to go up. Further evidence of this is supplied from Pororan in material collected by Mr. Gordon Thomas, which I quote with his permission:

> A man will often dream that a relative or friend is ascending a coco-nut tree or going out in a canoe, and will see in his dream that the relative or friend will fall out of the coco-nut tree or is capsized from his canoe. He will tell the one dreamt of about his dream and will warn him not to do as he has dreamt. Sometimes they will laugh at the dreamer and will take no notice of the warning. At such times it is usual that the dream will come true and the accident will happen.
>
> Some men more than others have the gift of prophetic dreams. Hakaria has on several occasions dreamt of seeing a child taken away by a spirit during the night. On the following morning the child has been dead.

Conversely, dreams are also thought to ensure success. 'If a man dreams of hunting pig, he takes the dogs to the bush next day and
[153] gets one.' In view of the known susceptibility of the native to suggestion, it is not unlikely that such dreams as this would be stimuli to successful effort.

It is recognized that some people are able to interpret dreams, but I did not hear of an instance in which such a person was actually consulted as to the meaning of a dream, either with or without payment. No reference was made in our discussions to this being done. But it may be. Some people said that if they had bad dreams they did not like to tell them to anybody.

'RECIPROCAL' DREAMS

154 Several instances of dreams in which two people were concerned came to my notice. Unfortunately, I did not check any of them by questioning the other people concerned, so I cannot offer corroborative evidence. They seem, however, to be sufficiently interesting to record at their face value.

A man may dream of having connexion with a woman and the woman

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explicable along similar lines. The two which are here given were told to me in the course of my inquiries after plants powerful as medicine, and had no connection whatever with any of the customs or dreams.

To make a woman desire you.

Wavaka (a grass with numbers of small sticky seeds).

Take the roots and some of the seeds when they are ripe. Chew them with the betel-nut mixture, go to the woman with her in your mouth and talk with her. When she has answered you go away. At night the woman will dream of you. In the morning she will come and say, 'What have you done to me? I dreamed about you.' You say, 'No, I did nothing to you, but you and I talked together while I chewed something.' The woman dreams about you every night, and if she sleeps during the day she dreams about you again. By and by you two get married.

To make a woman visit you.

Wakakawa (a small plant).

If you dream in the night that you have connexion with a woman, you get up at earliest dawn and get a leaf of this plant, rub it in your hands and wash it in a river; then go back to the village and the woman will come to you.

TYPE DREAMS

Of the 'type dreams' listed by Dr. Seligman (1923, p. 188, supplemented by Hilter) as common among the white races, my collection contains instances of all but one, the absence of which is easily explained. I have no evidence, however, that they bear, in the Melanesian mind, the meanings usually assigned to them in Europe, and also discovered in other parts of the world.

1. *Flying.* ('Usual meaning, good luck, success.')

Three examples. Also given as a dream that recurs. Sensation regarded as pleasant, but no definite meaning assigned to it, so far as I could ascertain.

2. *Fire.* ('May refer to reproduction or some form of creative energy.')

Only one example, in the course of a complex dream related by an old man (No. 13, p. 554). 'By and by I tried to light a fire but it would not burn.' The dream was regarded as a good one, but the relevant part of it was other than the fire.

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5. *Climbing a tree or going uphill.* ('Success, when waked.')

Seven examples, if we include a dream of climbing a rope that went up into the sky. In two of these the climbing of the tree was followed by flying from it, and this was regarded as the most important part of the dream, foreboding death. In others the act of climbing is taken to indicate a promise; these are lucky dreams.

6. *Loss of a tooth or teeth.* ('Death of a near relative.')

Not referred to as actual dream of the night before, but entirely made in discussion. 'If I eat a lot at night I sometimes dream all my teeth have gone away. In the morning I feel for them and they are still there.' No particular significance appeared to be attached to this dream, but one informant who reported it said it was a good dream, because some one would say to him, 'Oh, you are an old man now.' It is possible that the dream is regarded as good because of the greater prestige attaching to the older men which was thus attained by the dreamer.

5. *The Œdipus dream.*

One clear example of this as 'manifest content' of dream, if 'extended to include connexion with any relative within the forbidden degrees of the people concerned' (Seligman, 1923, p. 188). For further discussion of this question see p. 554.

6. *Raw Meat.* ('Foreboding disaster, possibly death.')

Two examples, in all cases the meat being pig, which is cooked and eaten in the dream. In two of these there is definite mention of its being 'cut up', in the others this is implied. Always said to be a good dream 'because we had pig to eat'. The idea of disaster is definitely not associated with this dream.

7. *Dream of being incompletely clothed.* ('Goes back to childhood.')

Does not occur in my collection. Absence may be accounted for by the fact that these natives habitually wear little or no clothing.

CLASSIFICATION OF INCIDENTS IN THE DREAMS ACCORDING TO THEIR 'MANIFEST CONTENT'

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Since it is of interest to the student of native psychology to determine how far the dreams of primitive people resemble our own, the 'manifest content' of the dreams in my collection will now be considered in some detail, and an attempt will be made to

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husbands had recently died (actually). Some of the men of the village came to me and said: 'Why do you work on this house?' I replied that I desired to do so. Then one of the widows came to me and said: 'We can pay you for the work which you are doing.' I continued working on the house. Then the same widow came to me and said: 'Do you like me?' I replied that I did not know her. She then proposed that we should have intercourse, but I replied that I could not do so, for it would bring me to my misfortune. She replied that they should not matter, but I resisted her advances and then I suddenly woke up.

MEANS DESIGNATED GOOD OR BAD

In many cases the dreamers did not have any definite idea whether a given dream was good or bad. In some they were quite clear upon this point, but were unable to give a reason for their decision. Such information as I was able to obtain is given at the conclusion of each dream quoted in the present chapter, but it is brought together here for convenience of reference.

A. *Good dreams.*

1. All dreams of cooking and eating pig are good, 'because we had pig to eat'. The only exception is a dream in which the *urat* cooked the pig, and the dreamer did not eat any because he was too frightened. This was a bad dream.

2. Dreams are described as 'good' even though their contents seem to us alarming, if the dreamer feels well when he wakes. (See No. 1, p. 555, and No. 14, p. 560.)

3. Dreams are regarded as good in which the dreamer triumphs over some difficulty. The fighting dream (No. 72, p. 566) was good 'because I was strong in the fight and killed the man'. Not expressly stated, but clearly present, is the idea of success in the following dream, which has not previously been quoted:

No. 73. Rus (adult female).

I dreamed a man wanted to have intercourse with me, and he pulled at me, and I fell down, and he called out to me, and I did not want to. Then we paddled in a canoe, and we went to the bottom because of a big wind, and we all drank sea-water; then we swam, and there was a strong wind, and the canoe was broken, and we carried it and brought it to the top of the water, and it was very heavy. It was all broken up, and we went ashore on to the reef, and then we went to the taro garden, and came back to the village at night when it was dark. This is a good dream.

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Perhaps the same idea, expressed in the triumph of the hot spirits, when I took some rope and tied up the child, induced the writer of the dramatic dream given on p. 567 (No. 10) to the belief it was a good dream, although it would surely seem to have been pleasant to experience.

4. Certain simple wish-fulfilment dreams are regarded as good for obvious reasons, such as the money dream (No. 15, p. 559). 'This is a good dream; I was glad; I thought I really had a lot of money.' The disappointment at waking and finding it was not true does not seem to be concerned in the matter. (This is also the case, I believe, in our own similar dreams.)

B. *Bad dreams.*

1. All dreams are bad wherein the dreamer is frightened. Here belong almost all the dreams about *sese*, with the few exceptions previously mentioned. For the same reason the 'falling' dreams are also bad. This is the reason most frequently assigned for describing a dream as a bad one. As one dreamer put it: 'It is always a bad thing to dream of being afraid.'

2. Dreams are bad if the dreamer feels ill when he wakes, even if their contents appear to be harmless or even pleasant. There could appear to be nothing sufficiently dreadful in the following dream to produce the effect described.

No. 31. Waiar (a neighbour, slightly older than the dreamer) and I went to a village a long way off, and we saw a great many things, and I cried, and I picked some *purpur* (flowers or aromatic plants which the natives like to wear on their persons), and we sat down under the sun-shelter, and we ate *kokoh* (ceremonial pudding, also given to guests), and we went back again, and I cried. Then Waiar and I went, the two of us, to a house, one house standing by itself. We waited there, we stayed some time there with a child, a very fine child. I cried for some *purpur* but the woman did not want to give it to me. Then we went back, and all the people were in a hole in the rock. Then we went back to the village. Then I woke up and felt ill. This is a bad dream, because I felt ill when I woke. If I had a good dream, when I woke I should feel all right.

3. To dream of the dead is usually bad. One dreamer commented: 'If I dream about people who are living, my skin is all right; if I dream about people who are dead, when I wake up my skin is no good.' An exception to this occurs in the dream of a

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159 woman that she was taken by *urar* to the place of the dead and saw her mother: 'This was a good dream: I was glad to see my mother.'

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

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Comments by the dreamer. This is a good dream. The *wrar* were those we called yesterday at the taro garden. When they brought me to the tree that looked like a boat they said to me: 'You sit down, you hold the rudder firmly with your foot.' When I woke up I thought of my knife, and I thought I had thrown it away into the bush the day before yesterday when I finished making *mesak*. So I got up and went to look for it in the bush; didn't you hear me shut the door of my house? I looked for it in the bush, but I could not find it; then I came back and found it stuck in the rafters of the house. 159 787

Comments by the recorder. Sobak is my next-door neighbour, his house is barely 20 feet from my own. I had heard him go out in the night, and had wondered what he was doing. The ceremony referred to is the one described in Chapter IX in which he had played a part. Small articles such as knives, &c., are usually stuck in the rafters of the house for safe-keeping. 159 [352]

No. 59. Gomar (adult female).

I dreamed about a child, about as big as Waror (i.e. about 7 or 8 years old.) It (Waror is a girl, but from the pronoun used the sex of the dream-child is left undetermined) took me up and threw me up into the air, and I fell down on to the ground. Then the child took me up again and threw me again on top, and I cried out: '*Wa, wa, wa, wa.*' I fell down, and I took some dirt and made the child's face swell up; I covered its face with dirt. Then it ran after me, and took a stone and beat me, and I ran away and hid, and it ran after me, and I stood still and took a rope and tied the child up, and tried to shut it up but I could not, and it ran after me, and I trembled. Then it took another stone, and beat me again, and I called out: '*Ia, ia, Binas!*' Then Binas said: 'What are you fighting? You leave her alone, let her stay quiet; if you do it again I shall beat you.' So I ran away, and fell down, and hid, and I took some rope and tied up the child. This is a very good dream. I called out aloud in my sleep, and Pinari woke me up. 154 159

Comment by recorder. Gomar is Pinari's wife; Binas is another of his wives. The dreamer could give no reason why she considered this a good dream, but she was very definite about it.

Perhaps there should be included here a dream which comes the nearest of any in my collection to what we should call a nightmare. It took place during an illness, and its physical cause may well have been fever. It was related to me after the dreamer's recovery.

No. 42. Wasang (adult male).

When I was ill I saw something that had an axe; it had no hands, it was very fat, it had a mouth. It was very large, but when I came close up to it, it was small.

4: Thomas U-5 (no date) 1931 ON6 Buka ON6
Pororan

Each village has, amongst its older men and women, some with a very fair knowledge of native medicines and also, unfortunately, one or two with a secret knowledge of poisons. The administration of curative and prophylactic medicines is usually accompanied by elaborate rites which the patient must rigidly observe. Contraceptives are commonly used by the women and one herb is claimed to be what might be termed a " contra-contraceptive," *i.e.*, after a woman has been barren for several years, as a result of taking a contraceptive, this herb will make her fertile again. When epidemics occur villages as yet untouched will place small sticks, leaning outwards, on the various roads to ward off the arrival of the spirit of sickness. The sticks are smeared with the spittle of betel-nut, pepper and lime. If the cry of a certain night-bird is heard over a village where a patient lies dangerously ill, it is usual then for any further attempt to combat the illness to cease. Death has spoken. The bird's call is looked upon as the inevitable token of death, and the relations commence to gather together their presents for the dead in readiness for throwing them into the coffin or grave. It is strange, but the cases where to my own knowledge the bird's call has actually preceded the death of a patient have been numerous.

DRUM SIGNALLING ON PORORAN ISLAND

Pororan legend has it that in the days of long ago (*manus*) before drum signalling had been introduced a strange resonant noise was heard coming from the bush by the men of the village one evening. Half fearful investigations were made and it was found that the noise came from a swinging branch beaten by the wind upon a hollow tree. From this sprang the idea of the *tui*, or wooden drum, which is used so extensively throughout Buka, Bougainville and other Melanesian islands.

The making of these drums in the early days, before steel implements were introduced, was a long, tedious and almost sacred performance. In many of the *tui* the aperture at the top is but an inch to an inch and a half in width extending the full length of the drum, while the outer circumference measures in many cases as much as eight feet six inches. Sharpened clam-shells, fastened to spear hafts or long sticks were the only tools used for the work.